



AMES LABORATORY

U. S. Department of Energy



Ames Laboratory's Readiness Review Process

The Ames Laboratory Readiness Review Process provides strong support for Integrated Safety Management. Readiness Review is initiated during initial project planning and the scoping and allocation of resources. Line management utilizes tools such as an Activity ES&H Hazard Identification Checklist, developed by the Laboratory's Safety Review Committee, to analyze and document the identification of hazards. Hazard Identification Training is provided to line management to support hazard identification skills. A formal review, conducted according to a detailed procedure, provides a forum for the activity supervisor, safety specialists and engineering professionals to discuss the hazards associated with the work, review the applicable standards, detail the required control mechanisms and establish the related safety envelope. Approval and authorization is documented on a Readiness Review Activity Approval Form. Once the agreed upon conditions and requirements are met the review is finalized through Operational Approval by the Safety Review Committee. The level and rigor of documentation, such as procedures and training, are determined according to the level of hazards and complexity of the work. Ames Laboratory ensures feedback and continuous improvement success through a variety of mechanisms that involve general workers, line safety coordinators, management and independent specialists. Additionally, on-going activities undergo Readiness Review on a five-year basis.

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Frequently Asked Questions About Readiness Review

What is Readiness Review?

Readiness Review is a process designed for the identification, hazard categorization and review of Ames Laboratory activities for environmental, safety and health issues. Readiness Review ensures that controls, commensurate with the hazards associated with an activity, are applied before an activity is approved for performance within Ames Laboratory (DOE) owned or rented spaces.

Is Readiness Review mandatory?

Yes, Readiness Review is required for all research and support activities funded by Ames Laboratory or occurring in an Ames Laboratory facility. Activities that only have hazards similar to those encountered and/or accepted by the general public in an office environment do not require Readiness Review.

What is the origin of the Readiness Review process?

The Ames Laboratory Director established a Safety Review Committee in 1993 and directed the development of a Readiness Review process. The process is documented in a formal written procedure with a hazard identification form and an approval form.

Who initiates a Readiness Review?

The activity supervisor, the person with responsibility for supervision and coordination of the development and/or operation of the activity, initiates the Readiness Review.

How does one initiate a Readiness Review?

First, a Readiness Review packet must be completed. It includes the name of the activity, a description of the activity, identified hazards associated with the work and brief hazard management statements detailing how the hazards will be controlled. The activity supervisor is required to obtain signature approval from the appropriate Group Leader, Program Director and Safety Coordinator or Representative. Readiness Review packets are available from the Environment, Safety, Health and Assurance (ESH&A) office or access them on the ESH&A Web Page.

What are “brief hazard management statements”?

Hazard management statements have no specific format or length. They can be covered in as little as 2-3 sentences or might require a paragraph; it depends on the type and severity of the hazard. The ESH&A office can assist with the development of these statements.

What happens after the Readiness Review packet is completed?

The ESH&A office will review the Readiness Review packet for completeness, assign an activity number and route the packet to safety and engineering specialists for review. After the packet is routed, an ESH&A specialist is assigned Lead Specialist responsibility for the Readiness Review. The Lead Specialist will then arrange for a Developmental Approval meeting.

What is a Developmental Approval meeting and who participates?

The Developmental Approval meeting is an opportunity for interested safety and engineering specialists to discuss the activity and ask the activity supervisor questions about a particular issue or seek clarification of the information provided. The purpose of the Developmental meeting is to identify issues (e.g. hazard controls, employee training) that need to be resolved prior to getting Operational Approval.

Will Operational Approval involve another meeting?

The ESH&A Lead Specialist may elect to hold another meeting, but if all of the issues identified in the Developmental Meeting are resolved, there may be no need to reassemble the review team.

What happens after the Operational Approval meeting?

If all issues are resolved, the Lead Specialist forwards a recommendation to the Chair of the Safety Review Committee that Operational Approval be granted for the activity. If the Safety Review Committee Chair concurs, an approval letter is issued. Approval is good for 5 years.

No more safety reviews for five years sounds pretty good to me.

Operational oversight is provided primarily by the line organization, including safety coordinators and representatives. Independent Walk-Throughs by upper management and safety specialists are also performed. If an activity modification or relocation occurs an additional Readiness Review is required.

With all these meetings, how long does it take to complete a Readiness Review?

The amount of time it takes to complete a Readiness Review depends on how quickly documentation is completed and returned to ESH&A and how quickly any identified issues are resolved. Depending on the circumstances, this could be a few days or a few months.

Readiness Review seems like a lot of work. Why is it so important?

Readiness Review is important because it helps the activity supervisor understand the various requirements that need to be fulfilled in order for the Laboratory to be in compliance with environmental, safety and health regulations. It's also a great opportunity to work with safety and engineering specialist on controls that ensure employees are provided a safe and healthy workplace.